

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic The Midwest Athletic Club

and/or common The Midwest Hotel

2. Location

WASHINGTON

street & number 6 North Hamlin

___ not for publication

city, town Chicago

___ vicinity of

state Illinois

code 012

county Cook

code 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name James Clark

street & number 46 Lake Street

city, town Oak Park

___ vicinity of

state Illinois 60302

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cook County Recorder of Deeds

street & number 118 North Clark Street

city, town Chicago

state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Illinois Historic Structure Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1972 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Sites
Illinois Department of Conservation

city, town 405 East Washington, Springfield

state Illinois

7. Description

Condition
 excellent (exterior) deteriorated
 good (interior) ruins
 fair (interior) unexposed

Check one (exterior)
 unaltered
 altered (interior)

Check one
 original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The thirteen-story structure designed to house the Midwest Athletic Club is a free-standing L-shaped building located on the northern edge of Garfield Park at the Northwest intersection of Hamlin Avenue and Madison Street. Nine bays face Hamlin; seven face Madison. It is a fireproof steel-frame building with overall dimensions measuring 144' on Hamlin x 122' on Madison. The first two stories are sheathed in cream-colored terra cotta; the upper eleven are a buff-colored brick. Ornamental trim is terra cotta. Crowning the building is a recessed mansard roof.

The exterior integrity of the building is excellent. Its handsome terra cotta Baroque trim is totally intact as is the cast-ironwork surrounding the entrances to the main lobby and the athletic facility. First-floor store fronts and the second-story windows are being rehabilitated to conform with the building's original appearance.

There is an aesthetic cohesiveness to the building's clearly defined exterior design. The arch is the keynote. Triple arches form an arcade pattern on every bay of the second story where the dining rooms were located. This is repeated in taller windows on alternating bays on the fifth floor which housed club offices in front and a two-story gymnasium with running track in the rear. Above each of these bays terra cotta trim in a rope pattern separating the three windows runs up six stories culminating in yet another triple arch. These six floors and that above contained the building's 171 hotel rooms. The Club had two ballrooms, expressed on the building's exterior by monumental two-story arches filling each bay. On the exterior of the third-fourth floor ballroom the arches are set off by recessed terra cotta work, and have balustrades at the base. Between each arch is a tall low-relief twisted column topped by an urn. Terra cotta medallions containing human busts are found between the arches. The two story thirteenth-floor ballroom also has tall arches trimmed in terra cotta filling each bay.

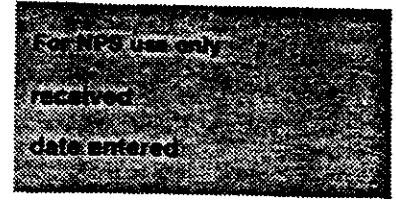
The building, on the exterior, is very simply and clearly divided into sections. The first two floors, faced in terra cotta, form a visual base. Separated by a Greek-key frieze and balustrade is the third-fourth floor arcade where the downstairs ballroom is located. Above, separated by a second balustrade and a small cornice with monogrammed (MAC) shields marking each bay, is the Club office floor with tall windows topped by arches or deep cornices. The hotel floors above end abruptly at a bracketed cornice with round finials. Above the cornice is the grand ballroom clearly defined by the second two-story arcade. Pilasters between the arches support finials projecting above the building's parapet. Set behind the parapet, the building's mansard roof, elaborated with segmental arched gables at the corners, houses mechanical equipment.

There are two entrances to the building -- one to the lobby and one that accessed the athletic facilities and ballrooms directly. Both doorways are of ornamental cast iron, with the Club initials in a shield above.

Except for the lobby all other major interior spaces retain their integrity. In the basement is an olympic-size swimming pool. The floors at the pool level and on a balcony above are of colored mosaic in a geometric pattern. The pattern is continued into the pool. The other important athletic facility -- the fifth floor gymnasium is also intact. It's a two story space with³ running track (24 laps/mile) on a balcony overlooking the gym.

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The ballrooms have been altered little. There has been no subdivision of space. The third floor ballroom has large brass chandeliers and sconces that have only been painted. A beamed ceiling is painted in geometric, Renaissance-inspired patterns. The wooden door to the room is flanked by Renaissance ornamented pilasters and topped by a broken pediment with a shield above containing the Club initials. The top floor ballroom has its original window configurations. There are French doors on the east side opening onto a shallow balcony. Even today, the view across Garfield Park to the Loop is uninterrupted by any tall buildings.

Inside, the lobby has been altered, with a dropped ceiling and new walls. Originally the lobby was a two-story space surrounded by a balcony accessed by stairs. The stairway, with its cast iron balustrade, is there, but firewalls have been added. Future plans are to restore the lobby and remove the firewalls.

The building is currently undergoing a renovation that complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1926-1928

Builder/Architect

Michaelsen & Rognstad

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Midwest Athletic Club is significant for two basic reasons. Historically, it was the focus of community life in Garfield Park during the years the Club existed. Architecturally, it is a prominent, well-designed building, stylistically reflecting the historicism popular during the period and exhibiting a kind of elegance, although subdued, you would expect to find in a Club building for the elite members of a community. Finally, all of the exterior of the building and the major public spaces, excepting a remodeled lobby, have retained their integrity.

The Club, which grew out of the West Town Chamber of Commerce, the Active Club and the Garfield Park Club, was granted the State Charter in January, 1924. Arrangements were made for the sale of memberships and the name Midwest Athletic Club was selected. Founders included about a dozen west side leaders, many, prominent heads of businesses. Frank A. Alden, President of the Central Oak Park State Bank, was the first President. Other officers included Mark Shanks, President of the Standard Ice Cream Company, and A. H. Smith, President of the Madison and Kedzie State Bank. By July of 1924, the Club had its own publication. Enthusiasm was high; it was written "the Club will be the greatest factor in making the west side even greater."

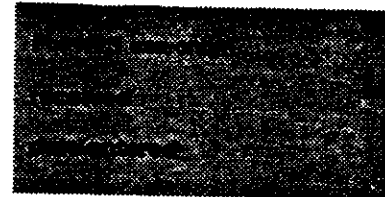
After careful study, the Club selection committee picked a site, one considered by member Charles A. Pipenhagen "the finest spot for the purpose on the entire west side." The Club was to be in a prominent location, on the north edge of Garfield Park. The park (along with Douglas and Humboldt Parks) was laid out by William LeBaron Jenney in the 1870's and improved in 1905 by Jens Jensen, who was the general superintendent and landscape architect for the West Side Park Commission. He designed the famous Garfield Conservatory (the largest publicly owned conservatory in the United States) and laid out the park, with its beautiful lagoons, drives, statuary, walks and formal gardens. This was the view the Club was to have -- the park and an uninterrupted view to downtown Chicago.

The architects selected to design the building were Club members Michaelsen & Rognstad. They were requested to prepare sketches and layouts for a \$1,000,000 building. To again quote Pipenhagen, who wrote "A Historical Review of the Midwest Athletic Club" for the Club publication circa 1930 "after a hurried trip to several eastern cities to study athletic club buildings completed only a short time before so that the Midwest might have the very last desirable features in club homes obtainable." Work on plans started January 1, 1926. Ground was broken January 30, 1926, and the Club had its official opening in March, 1928. The building was completed at a cost of \$1,800,000.

By 1928, the Midwest Athletic Club had 2000 members. Members consisted of prominent west side businessmen (and their families) including bank presidents and the leading officers of local businesses. This can readily be seen from the attached roster

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of officers. A list of bondholders was said (in a January 9, 1952 Chicago Tribune article) to have read like "the west side 400 past and present."

It was a very cohesive neighborhood. According to an October 15, 1931 article in The Garfieldian, west siders (many of whom were native white of Irish extraction) always thought of themselves as a "city within a city." An article in the March 24, 1928 Chicago Daily News entitled "West Side takes its place in the sun" makes very clear the important role the Club was to play. "With the completion of the Midwest Athletic Club building west siders believe they have taken a long step forward in solidifying the west side and in making possible closer cooperation on matters of interest to the community. While the Club is purely a social organization, it affords a meeting place for west side men that has formerly been lacking. "

The Club was a vital part of the community, and remained so, if on a smaller scale, after the Depression. Even before the building was constructed, in 1926, a women's auxiliary was formed and at one point had 450 members. It sponsored social events and had, in the building, its own dining room and lounge; from the beginning, the Club was not just to be a luncheon club for men.

The Midwest Athletic Club could not have offered finer sports facilities -- an olympic pool, handball courts, a billiard room, a gymnasium with running track. This was in addition to a library, exercise and sleeping rooms, public and private dining rooms and two large ballrooms.

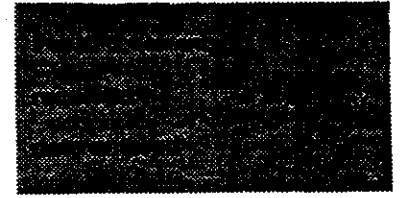
The Club building went into receivership in 1930 and became a hotel. Still the Club itself remained in operation sponsoring social and athletic events and survived to celebrate its tenth anniversary, despite its dire financial straits.

It is an interesting fact that the Club was named the Midwest Athletic Club and not, say, the Garfield Park Athletic Club -- despite its strong community ties. The founders thought of the Club as a very status place.

From researching clubs at the Chicago Historical Society and Burnham Library of the Art Institute of Chicago, it appears that there were no comparable clubs in any neighborhood of the city. There was the 1889 Country Club of Edgewater and the 1916 South Shore Country Club, but no social and athletic club outside the downtown or near-north area. The closest comparison might be the Racquet Club at 1363 North Dearborn designed by Rebori, Wentworth, Dewey and McCormick, 1923, but this building is nowhere near the size of the Midwest Athletic Club. Many of the downtown clubs were older, had larger memberships and fine facilities but they were founded around other considerations than the surrounding community. The Union League Club was founded as a Republican Society; the University Club had a membership requisite of college graduation.

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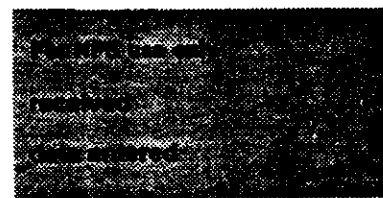
Even after the building changed hands and became a hotel, it remained a neighborhood landmark. The owners, to attract clientele, promoted its convenience to some 3500 nearby industries. In the 1940's, the building was owned by Arthur Wirtz, who housed and trained many of his stadium athletes, including prizefighters and the Blackhawks, there. Lights for a boxing ring are still set up in the gymnasium.

Architecturally, the Club building is significant in a number of ways. Even though the building was not designed by any well-known architectural firm, its fine detailing, generally inspired by Baroque architecture, and its aesthetic cohesiveness contribute to a high quality design. In addition, it has a sense of dignity and monumentality you'd expect to find in a private club not unlike that found in the Illinois Athletic Club, 112 South Michigan or the Chicago Athletic Association, 12 South Michigan. The Club building's importance is particularly clear because of its prominent location, overlooking Garfield Park and the city and because of its sheer size in relation to the residential neighborhood and low-scale commercial buildings surrounding it, even today.

The Midwest Athletic Club building, although suffering from a history of financial woes, stands proudly, with its exterior architectural integrity totally intact. A facility unequalled in any Chicago neighborhood, it serves as a reminder of the once thriving community surrounding it.

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"Cook County's White Elephant: Here's a chance to buy a good hotel cheap."
Chicago Daily News.

Eaton, Leonard E. Landscape Artist in America: The Life and Work of Jens Jensen.
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964.

The Garfieldian. Miscellaneous issues in the collection of the University of Illinois
West Side Historical Society archives.

Gregory, Jane. "Clubs with Class." Chicago Omnibus, February, 1967, pp.30-34.

"Housing in Chicago Communities." Chicago Land Use Survey. Chicago: Chicago Pean
Commission, 1940. Community Area 26. West Garfield Park

Illinois Historic Structures Survey, West Garfield Park.

Interview with Thomas Ivan, Vice President, Chicago Blackhawks.

Kitegawa, Evelyn M. and Taueber, Karl E. ed. Local Community Fact Book, Chicago
Metropolitan Area, 1960.

"Membership Cards of Clubs." File located at the Chicago Historical Society.

"The Midwest Hotel." brochure.

Miscellaneous issues of the official publication of the Midwest Athletic Club,
called at various times The Midwest Review, Midwest Magazine, Midwest Bulletin
and the Midwestern Club News, 1924 - 1938. Collection of the University of
Illinois Library from the West Side Historical Society archives.

Miscellaneous newspaper clippings from the 1920's. Collection of the University of
Illinois Library from the West Side Historical Society archives.

Pamphlet file on "Clubs." Chicago Historical Society.

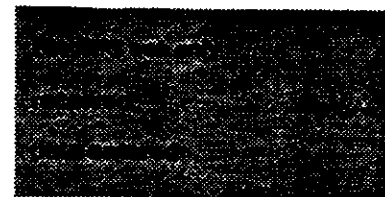
Photographic Collection. Chicago Historical Society

Pipenhagen, Charles E. "Historical Review of the Midwest Athletic Club."
Midwest Magazine, 1930.

"Proud Midwest Athletic Club Rocked by Financial Ups and Downs."
Chicago Tribune, January 9, 1952.

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Rennie, Dave. "In the Beginning." The Hamlin House Herald Gazette. ©1976.

"West Side takes its place in the Sun." Chicago Daily News, March 24, 1928, p.14.

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1008 CHAMPLIN AVENUE
 Corner Madison and Hamlin
 LEO B. WERNER, Club Manager



Telephone
KEDZIE 4401
 GEORGE W. SMITH, Fiscal Agent

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 MARK SHANKS, First Vice-Pres.
 Pres. Standard Ice Cream Co.
 B. J. BOEHM, Second Vice-Pres.
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 A. H. SMITH, Treasurer
 Pres. Madison & Kedzie State Bank

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 Sec'y-Treas. Pines-Winterfront Co.
 K. K. BELL
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 Pres. Treas. Gulbransen Co.

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 Pres. D. W. Bostelmann Co.
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 A. G. GULBRANSEN
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 A. H. SMITH

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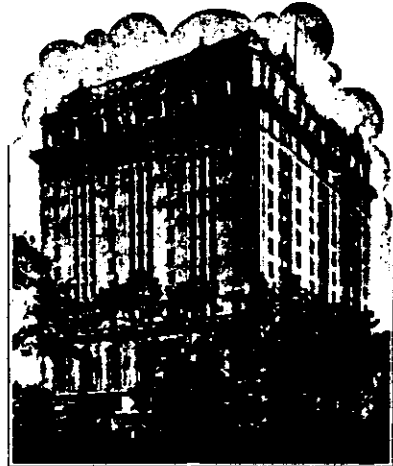
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 A. G. GULBRANSEN
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ATHLETIC
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 WALTER F. MARGGRAF
 EGBERT SCHRICK
 CHARLES M. JESSUP

GOLF
 EGBERT SCHRICK, Chairman
 J. W. SIXEAS, Vice-Chairman
 T. W. BARKER
 CLINTON BERRY
 W. D. MARTIN
 JOHN SCHRICK
 EUGENE SMITH



Michaelsen & Rognstad, Architects

Hooper & Janusch, Supervising Engineers

Ebenholz & Jorgensen, Builders

9. Major Bibliographical References

Burchard, Edward and Arvin, Martin J. District Fact Book for Seventy-five Chicago Local Communities. Chicago: 228 N. LaSalle St. August, 1935.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .2

Quadrangle name CHICAGO Loop

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

16	440160	416316600
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

--	--	--

D

--	--	--

E

--	--	--

F

--	--	--

G

--	--	--

H

--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

Northwest corner of Hamlin Avenue and Madison Street.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan S. Benjamin

organization Free lance Architectural Historian

date October 5, 1983

street & number 711 Marion Avenue

telephone (312) 432-1822

city or town Highland Park

state Illinois 60035

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature David Kennedy

title Director

date 12/30/83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

date

Keeper of the National Register

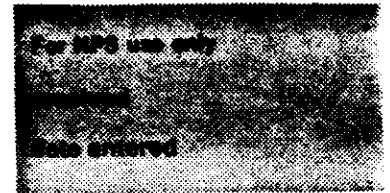
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The North 33 feet of the South 158 feet of Lot 5 (except that part thereof conveyed to the City of Chicago, by deed dated August 12, 1893, and recorded in the Recorder's Office of Cook County, IL, July 7, 1894, as document no. 2070355 in Book 4908, Page 290) in Runyan and Curtis' Subdivision of the East 5 acres of that part lying South of Lake Street of the West 1/2 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 11, Town 39 North, Range 13, East of the Third Principal Meridian.

Also: The West 110 feet of the South 125 feet of Lot 5 in Runyan and Curtis' Subdivision of the East 5 acres of that part of the West 1/2 of the Southwest 1/4 lying South of Lake Street of Section 11 aforesaid.

Also: Lot 10 (except the North 10 feet thereof) in Block 4 in Evans and Others' Subdivision of Blocks 1, 2, 3, and 4, in Osborne's Subdivision of the West 5 acres of the East 10 acres of that part lying South of Lake Street of the East 1/2 of the West 1/2 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 11, Town 39 North, Range 13, East of the Third Principal Meridian, in Cook County, IL. Commonly known as 6 N. Hamlin St., Chicago, IL.

**MIDWEST
ATHLETIC
CLUB**
1 900 000
E 460160
N 4636600

(BERWYN)
3467 IV SE

41°52'30"
87°45'

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with State of Illinois Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and City of Chicago

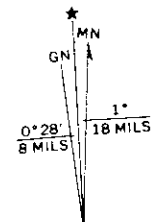
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1962. Topography by planetable surveys 1926. Revised 1963

Selected hydrographic data compiled from U.S. Lake Survey
Charts 751 (1963) and 752 (1963). This information is not
intended for navigational purposes

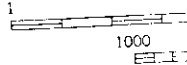
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Illinois coordinate system, east zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1972. This information not field checked



UTM GRID AND 1972 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



DEPTH

T
F
AN
A FOLDE